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ABSTRACT

Instructional Development (I.D.) encounters are dependent for success on such variables as power, politics, promotion, and organizational placement. I.D. consultants must be aware of power bases or orientation of other personnel and clients, e.g., these four "power personalities" which affect their efforts in managing I.D. encounters: the gate (information) keeper, the decision maker, the opinion leader, and the change agent. Role negotiation between the consultant and client best achieves an equal power relationship. Promotion, or publicity, entails providing information on the organization's I.D. style and services, as well as on consultative style and orientation. Since organizational placement of the consultant influences trust and openness, the consultant should report to the chief academic officer to maximize his stability and legitimacy. At Iowa's Kirkwood Community College, diverse instructional development activities merged into an I.D. center in fall 1977, which brought all resources and activities under one coordinating function. This center stresses a supportive, service-oriented philosophy, as well as a collaborative internal atmosphere. Promotion of services have been both formal (external, highly publicized) and informal (low-key, internal). A list of 11 references is attached. (SW)

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SUCCESSFUL I. D. ENCOUNTERS

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SUCCESSFUL I.D. ENCOUNTERS

There are many ideas afloat today about variables which interact, influence and affect the success of an Instructional Development (I.D.) encounter. Power, politics, promotion, and ID organizational placement are four variables which most certainly affect the degree of success of an ID project. This discussion examines these variables as influences on a ID encounter as found within an organization with an internal consultant.

Power and Politics

Power and politics are often not understood, explained away, or wished away because they are not taught and seldom examined since they connote Machiavellian principles which run counter to our predominate humanistic values. These variables are considered corruptive even if one is only attempting to understand and deal with them in a responsive manner. But it would be somewhat naive if ID consultants (to be effective change agents) failed to understand and realistically deal with these forces which can have considerable impact.

Since an institution is a political environment with various political constituencies, vested interest groups, or power bases, an ID consultant to be effective must be cognizant of his/her own institutional political structure, because little attention on the effects of power and politics on an ID project may result in painful and/or disasterous ends.

While each organization/institution differs politically each is composed of individuals, each who has developed a power base or clout which is reflected in the esteem others regard that individual. It is wise for the consultant to be aware of the power/clout of the client and other influencial personnel. There are three elements which combine to form an individual's power base in an organization. (Zaleznik, 1975). They are:

1. The quantity of formal responsibility vested in the position

2. Professional competence gained by reputation

3. Personality or human relations style

These three elements form a functional personality with implications of the individual's political and power influence in the organization. These personalities are the:

Gate Keeper - one who has control over information within an organization. Power is held in the dissemination or withholding of valuable information.

Decision Maker - a person who has authority to make binding decisions for the organization. Source of decisions often necessary in ID projects.

Opinion Leader - an individual who best reflects organization views. Sometimes this person is also the decision maker. An important ally for a consultant.

Change agent - someone who actively promotes a solution to a problem. This individual is often an ID client who promotes and assists in innovation adoption.

Being cognizant of these various individual styles as well as the organizational constituencies and vested interest groups will assist the consultant in successfully managing an ID encounter. An ID consultant's role should be to remain neutral, yet realize that a client's advice is rarely politically innocent. (Davies, 1975)

As there is almost always initially an unequal power relationship between a consultant and the client, the consultant must facilitate a more equalized power position between the two. This is best accomplished through role negotiation (Bennis, et al, 1973) in which the initial power position is reduced through mutual problem solving and goal clarity. Role negotiation can best be attained if the consultant processes the role negotiation by exhibiting: 1)role adaptability, 2)cognitive flexibility, 3)perceptual sensitivity, 4)consistency of communication, and 5)interpersonnel involvement. (Dinkmeyer, 1973). This negotiation and processing of the power base assists in developing a relationship which is

collaborative, trustful, productive, and responsible, (Betz, 1973) and this consultive collaborative relationship will most likely have more extensive and far reaching productive results which the power bound relationship could not develop.

Power and politics are not often taught, seldom examined and consequently not well understood or dealt with in an effective manner by an ID consultant. But power and politics are realities which should not be neglected as a consultant could become a pawn in a game with no understanding of the rules or players.

Organizational Placement

The often times corrosive results of power and politics can be minimized if a collaborative, humanistic consulting style is encouraged and supported which emphasizes trust and openness. A factor encouraging a collaborative climate is the organizational placement of the ID consultant or ID office. It is recommended that the ID office report to the chief academic officer (Durzo 1977, Diamond 1975, Bratton and Fleckenstein 1977, Whitfield and Brammer 1973). Such placement provides more stability and legitimation of a consultant's role or office. Essential Funding is accessible as well as mobility within the organization to intercorrelate and build linking relationships to promote productive, worthwhile change.

Also such organizational placement alleviates wasteful duplication of efforts and scarce resources. Continuity of efforts and follow through on projects, a critical factor in predicting successful ID projects, (Lawrason 1979) is enhanced.

Promotion

Promotion should not be overlooked as a variable in successful encounters. A promotional philosophy or position needs to be developed and implemented which provides information on the ID style as well as services offered. Depending on

organization factors and existing climate there are two basic promotional approaches: (Diamond, et al, 1975)

1) low key internal promotion in which the consultant works with key individuals - often top administration or
2) an external, highly-publicized program in which there is high visibility and support.

And there could a combination of these two - high publicity for some ID projects and low posture on others.

Promotion also entails providing information, not only on the services provided but also the consultant and/or ID office's orientation and consultative style and mode. This information if effectively disseminated will alleviate some misconceptions and contribute to a more successful encounter.

An Organizational Example

Previously at Kirkwood Community College, Cedar Rapids, Iowa, there had been a history of various diverse instructional development activities with limited exchange occurring between the individuals; ID projects interacted separately and often in differing directions from existing institutional programs. Instructional development personnel were hired for a short span finished the project and the cycle repeated itself. This resulted in unnecessary duplication of both effort and resources.

This pattern changed in the Fall, 1977, when an Instructional Development Center was established as an institutional educational support service. It brough all instructional development resources and activities under one coordinating/linking function. Reporting to the chief academic officer (Assistant Superintendent for Education) the Instructional Development Center brought all ID personnel and

projects into a unified body.

The philosophy of the Center states that a supportive environment is maintained by providing continuity and constructive growth and change for the individual and the institution. As a new service, the characteristics that the IDC initiated and nutures as part of its philosophy entail:

1) Accessibility
2) Responsibility
3) Productivity
4) Flexibility
5) Openness

A linking model was adapted (see poster at AECT session) to foster an intercorrelated ID system to maximize ID efforts college wide by unifying and integrating existing institutional resources and efforts. The Instructional Development Center separate from both the AV services and library, used a team approach involving the varied individuals expertise resources in the comprehensive systematic instructional development efforts.

A collaborative style has been emphasized to promote stable and productive results. Because of the organization placement, there is institutional mobility and accessibility, as well as legitimation and credibility of the ID role. The Center has also provided much needed continuity and follow up which differs from previous diverse efforts and projects.

The promotion efforts of the center have been both formal and informal with the efforts aimed at providing information both on the services provided by the IDC and the style that the IDC utilizes. A videotape was produced (see at AECT convention) with the formal intent of promoting the IDC's services as well as portraying the collaborative, accessible and productive elements.

The linkage model developed at Kirkwood has reduced unnecessary duplication of efforts and has provided for more successful and continuance of ID encounters.

The organizational placement has contributed in building a climate which has postered a collaborative, humanistic mode which has subsequently minimized overt power and political manipulation.

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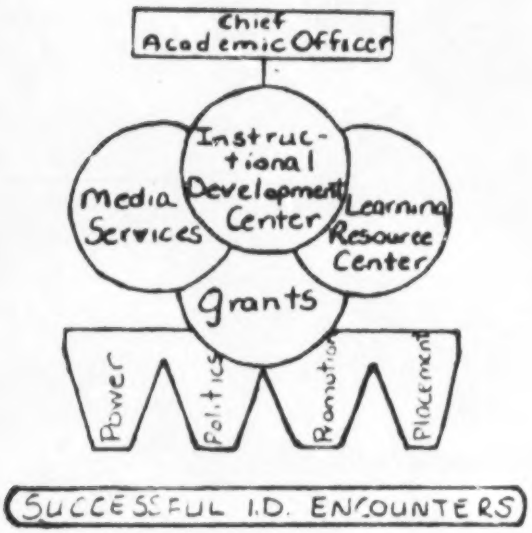

Instructional Development Encounters frequently impact and affect a variety of organizational components and personnel at various levels; thus, I.D. is often prey to organization's power and political strategies which frequently react by impeding or blocking the ID efforts as they are seen as a threat to the current distribution of power and politics.

An ID consultant must be cognizant of the power and political base as they affect an encounter. Though the often times corrosive effect can be minimized by developing a collaborative style which de-emphasizes the power base and build a relationship based more on trust and interdependence.

Power and politics vacillate while the variables of placement and promotion are more stable and in which the consultant has more influence on.

Placement of ID within the organization can facilitate the effectiveness of ID encounters. Reporting to the chief academic officer provides ID continuity and stability which are components of successful ID.

Promoting ID can be an effective means by which the ID services and image/climate are developed. The promotion style, active or low-keyed, serves to develop and reinforce a trusting, productive climate.

A model which enhances ID success is a linking/team approach in which ID is linked to other team members (here: Media Services, Grants, and Learning Resource Center) which share in developing a collaborative, trusting climate with an appreciation and understanding of the variables of power, politics, promotion and placement in the success of ID Encounters.